

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference PU030328	FOR FURTHER ACTION		See Form PCT/IPEA/416																								
International application No. PCT/US04/05467	International filing date (day/month/year) 25 February 2004 (25.02.2004)	Priority date (day/month/year)																									
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC IPC(7): H04J 11/00; A63F 13/12 and US Cl.: 370/310, 338; 463/39																											
Applicant THOMSON LICENSING S.A.																											
<p>1. This report is the international preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of <u>3</u> sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p>3. This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (sent to the applicant and to the International Bureau) a total of <u>3</u> sheets, as follows:</p> <div style="margin-left: 40px;"> <input type="checkbox"/> sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis of this report and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions). <input type="checkbox"/> sheets which supersede earlier sheets, but which this Authority considers contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, as indicated in item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box. </div> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">b. <input type="checkbox"/> (sent to the International Bureau only) a total of (indicate type and number of electronic carrier(s)) _____, containing a sequence listing and/or tables related thereto, in computer readable form only, as indicated in the Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing (see Section 802 of the Administrative Instructions).</p> <p>4. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="width: 20%;">Box No. I</td> <td>Basis of the report</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. II</td> <td>Priority</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. III</td> <td>Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. IV</td> <td>Lack of unity of invention</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. V</td> <td>Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. VI</td> <td>Certain documents cited</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. VII</td> <td>Certain defects in the international application</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Box No. VIII</td> <td>Certain observations on the international application</td> </tr> </table>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Box No. I	Basis of the report	<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. II	Priority	<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. III	Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. IV	Lack of unity of invention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Box No. V	Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VI	Certain documents cited	<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VII	Certain defects in the international application	<input type="checkbox"/>	Box No. VIII	Certain observations on the international application
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Date of submission of the demand 23 September 2004 (23.09.2004)		Date of completion of this report 18 November 2004 (18.11.2004)																									
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/ US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: IPEA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230		Authorized officer Steven HD Nguyen <i>Renair</i> Telephone No. (571) 272-2600																									

Form PCT/IPEA/409 (cover sheet)(January 2004)

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.

PCT/US04/05467

Box No. 1 Basis of the report

1. With regard to the language, this report is based on the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

☐ This report is based on translations from the original language into the following language _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:

- ☐ international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b))
☐ publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4)
☐ international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3)

2. With regard to the elements of the international application, this report is based on (replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report):

☐ the international application as originally filed/furnished

☒ the description:

pages 1-3 and 5-9 as originally filed/furnished

pages* 4 received by this Authority on 15 September 2005 (15.09.2005)

pages* NONE received by this Authority on _____

☒ the claims:

pages 11, 13 and 14 as originally filed/furnished

pages* NONE as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19

pages* 10, 12 received by this Authority on 15 September 2005 (15.09.2005)

pages* NONE received by this Authority on _____

☒ the drawings:

pages 1/3-3/3 as originally filed/furnished

pages* NONE received by this Authority on _____

pages* NONE received by this Authority on _____

☐ a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) - see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing.

3. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages _____
☐ the claims, Nos. _____
☐ the drawings, sheets/figs _____
☐ the sequence listing (specify): _____
☐ any table(s) related to the sequence listing (specify): _____

4. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).

- ☐ the description, pages _____
☐ the claims, Nos. _____
☐ the drawings, sheets/figs _____
☐ the sequence listing (specify): _____
☐ any table(s) related to the sequence listing (specify): _____

* If item 4 applies, some or all of those sheets may be marked "superseded."

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.
PCT/US04/05467

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)

Claims 1-20 YES

Claims NONE NO

Inventive Step (IS)

Claims 1-20 YES

Claims NONE NO

Industrial Applicability (IA)

Claims 1-20 YES

Claims NONE NO

2. Citations and Explanations (Rule 70.7)

Claims 1-20 the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(3), because the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest a method for providing a capability to save a savable character at an arbitrary point in the first game onto a transportable medium to form a current saved character, wherein the current saved character is loadable for play in a future game independent of the first game.

----- NEW CITATIONS -----

user. This allows the user to play with the saved character in different gaming environments against different users at other wireless hotspots.

Referring now to the Figures, FIG. 1 depicts an exemplary illustration of a system setup 100 for transportable character-centric gaming for wireless hotspots according to an embodiment of the present invention. The system 100 includes a WLAN (wireless local area network) hotspot base station 101 for coordinating communications. It is to be noted that the term "hotspot" denotes e.g., any company providing Internet connection, local area network and/or virtual private network (VPN) access from a given location.

The base station 101 is in communication with a WLAN hotspot wireless access server 105 preferably via e.g., a wired connection 102 for providing access to the Internet, local area network and/or VPN. According to an aspect of the present invention, each hotspot includes a WLAN hotspot gaming server 103 for storing at least one game and/or gaming environment. The games(s) may include, for example, any variety of computer games (e.g., car racing, arcade, combat games, role playing games, etc.) and include game-provided characters. The gaming environment(s) include, e.g., computer game settings without characters.

The base station 101 is in communication with the gaming server 103 preferably via, e.g., a wired connection 104. The WLAN base station 101 coordinates communications between each WLAN user 107 with other users within the same hotspot, with the gaming server, and with the wireless access server 105. It is to be noted that a WLAN user 107 is in wireless communication with the base station 101 to access server 105 for connection with, e.g., the Internet. Each WLAN user 107 is also in wireless communication with the base station 101 for connection to/communication with the gaming server 103.

For purposes of explanation of FIG. 1, each user 107 preferably utilizes e.g., a mobile device which is in wireless communication with the base station 101 via e.g., a transceiver. Such mobile device may comprise, for example, a laptop computer, PDA, hand-held gaming device, etc. Each user 107 has the capability to save a game character locally on, e.g., the mobile device. In the present specification, the term "character" denotes the person/object that the user controls in the game.

AMENDED SHEET

CLAIMS:

1. A method for providing transportable character-centric gaming at a wireless Local Area Network (WLAN) hotspot to a user comprising the steps of:

providing (201) a first gaming server at a first WLAN hotspot, wherein the gaming server is accessible from the WLAN hotspot;

providing (203) at least one first selectable game at said first gaming server having at least one savable character;

providing the capability to save (217) the savable character at an arbitrary point in the first game onto a transportable medium to form a current saved character, wherein the current saved character is loadable for play in a future game independent of said first game.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing (203) a second game, wherein the future game comprises the second game.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the first and second games are different.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing (203) a second game and a second WLAN hotspot, wherein the future game comprises the second game at the second WLAN hotspot and the first WLAN hotspot and the second WLAN hotspot are different.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

determining (205) if a previously saved character exists for the selectable game

which is desired to be used,

wherein if a previously saved character exists further comprising the steps of entering (207) the previously saved character for use in the selectable game; and

wherein if a previously saved character does not exist, further comprising the step of allowing play (209) of the selectable game with a game-provided character.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

AMENDED SHEET

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9. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

providing (201) a second gaming server at a second WLAN hotspot, the second gaming server including at least one second game and at least one second gaming environment;

providing the ability to log onto (201) the second WLAN hotspot and access the second gaming server;

providing the ability to select (203) at least one of the second game or the second gaming environment on the second gaming server;

providing the ability to load (207) the transportable medium onto the second gaming server; and

providing the ability to load (207) the saved character for play in the at least one selected second game or second gaming environment.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising the step of providing the ability to transport (217) the savable character from the first gaming server to the second gaming server.

11. A method for providing transportable character-centric gaming comprising the steps of:

providing (203) at least one first selectable game having at least one savable character, wherein said savable character is savable independent of the first game;

providing the capability to save (213) the at least one savable character at an arbitrary point in the at least one first game onto a transportable medium to form a saved character; and

providing the capability to load (205) the saved character for play in at least one of said first selectable game or other games, wherein the saved character is loadable for play independent of said first game.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of providing (203) a first gaming server and a first wireless local area network hotspot, wherein the first game is provided on the first gaming server at the first wireless local area network hotspot.

AMENDED SHEET